



## **WINE AND BEER TASTING PILOT IN GROCERY STORES – QUESTION AND ANSWER**

### **What will tastings look like?**

- Each store may host 12 tastings on premise during the pilot. They must hold a minimum of six tastings, and are limited to one tasting per month.
- Wine and beer samples must be two ounces or less. Each customer may have up to a total of four ounces. No more than one sample of any single brand and type of wine or beer may be provided to a customer during any one visit to the premises.
- Food must be available for customers.
- Customers must stay in the tasting area while consuming samples.
- Stores may only advertise tasting events inside the store.
- The cost of sampling may not be born – directly or indirectly – by any liquor manufacturer, importer or distributor.
- Stores must notify their local enforcement office five business days before a tasting.
- Stores must prominently display their letter of authorization identifying them as a pilot participant during each tasting.

### **Is there a limit to the number of wines and beers offered at a tasting?**

It is up to the individual store to decide how many wines and beers they want to offer. Neither the law nor the LCB interim policy specifies the number of products the store can offer for tastings. However, the store must abide by the sample size limits.

### **What does it mean that customers can't have more than one sample of any brand and type of wine or beer?**

It means that the purpose of tastings is for customers to taste different types and brands of wine or beer, and that a second pour of any wine or beer previously sampled during a tasting, regardless of quantity, is not permitted.

### **Can a customer taste four different brands of Merlot? Or try four different types of wine of the same brand?**

Yes, this meets the requirements. As long as the type and/or brand are different for each tasting, then it meets the requirements.

### **Is there a maximum or minimum time limit to each tasting?**

It is up to the individual store to set the time limit for each tasting. Neither the law nor the LCB interim policy specifies time limits for tastings.

### **Can stores charge for the tasting?**

It is up to the individual store if they want to offer a tasting for free or charge a fee. Neither the law nor the LCB interim policy specifies price.

### **If the store is part of a chain, can locations that are not participating advertise tastings at a nearby location that is participating?**

No, advertising may take place only inside the participating store.

**For chain stores, may one participating store advertise a tasting at another participating store?**

No, advertising may take place only inside the participating store.

**What kind of food will stores have?**

It is up to the individual store what kind of food they want to provide during the tasting. Neither the law nor the LCB interim policy specifies what kind of food.

**Do store employees have to conduct the tastings?**

No, a store or chain may elect to have a third party vendor conduct the tastings. Safeway has decided to do this in their seven stores. Vendors must have either a Mandatory Alcohol Server Training (MAST) permit or attend a WSLCB-approved limited alcohol server training, such as the one offered at local enforcement offices. Vendors must be paid by the licensee. No monies may be paid to the vendor by a manufacturer, distributor, or supplier.

**What controls does the WSLCB have in place to ensure alcohol-related laws and regulations are followed?**

Public safety is the number one concern for the WSLCB. The agency will work with stores to ensure all state laws and regulations are being followed, as well as requirements set forth in the law and the LCB interim policy.

- Stores are required to separate the tasting area from the normal shopping area. Store employees must be able to observe all tasting activities to ensure minors and apparently intoxicated persons cannot possess or consume alcohol.
- Store employees working in the tasting area must receive WSLCB-approved limited alcohol server training. They can receive training from liquor enforcement officers regarding over service and identification during regularly scheduled classes at local enforcement offices. A Mandatory Alcohol Server Training permit also satisfies this requirement. More information about class dates and locations is available at [www.liq.wa.gov](http://www.liq.wa.gov).
- Enforcement officers will attend the first tasting to make sure controls are in place (i.e. separate tasting area).
- Enforcement officers will continue to monitor the tastings through announced and unannounced visits and compliance checks. They are authorized to give violations if they see them.

**What happens if stores don't follow pilot rules?**

The WSLCB plans to work with each store to ensure pilot requirements set forth in the law and the interim policy are followed. The WSLCB will work with stores to promote public safety and provide technical assistance. The WSLCB will deal with each store on a case by case basis if we begin to see repetitive errors.

**How can stores keep tasting areas separate?**

Stores must be able to monitor customers during the tasting, ensure minor and apparently intoxicated persons cannot possess or consume alcohol, and keep customers from wandering away from the tasting area with their sample. Neither the law nor the interim policy requires special barriers, but instead the WSLCB envisions that each store will have a table area set next to major traffic zones or something similar.

**How can the public submit comments or complaints?**

The Washington public can send comments, questions or concerns about the wine and beer tasting pilot to [tastingpilot@liq.wa.gov](mailto:tastingpilot@liq.wa.gov). The WSLCB will also collect feedback from participating stores.